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UNCLAS SECTION 01 OF 02 ROME 000586

SIPDIS

SENSITIVE

E.O. 12958: N/A

TAGS: [ECON](#) [ECPS](#) [ECPS IT](#) [ITECON](#)

SUBJECT: AMBASSADOR'S LUNCH WITH MINISTER OF COMMUNICATIONS

SUMMARY

1. (U) DURING HIS INITIAL MEETING WITH THE MINISTER OF  
UNCLASSIFIED

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COMMUNICATIONS, THE AMBASSADOR PROMOTED MOTOROLA'S BID FOR  
THE TENDER FOR A NATIONAL PUBLIC SAFETY DIGITAL MOBILE  
COMMUNICATIONS SYSTEM, SOUGHT FAIR MARKET ACCESS FOR U.S.  
FIRMS, AND OUTLINED THE U.S. MILITARY'S NEED FOR RADIO AND  
TELEVISION COMMUNICATIONS FREQUENCIES. END SUMMARY.

2. (U) MINISTER OF COMMUNICATIONS, MAURIZIO GASPARRI,  
HOSTED THE AMBASSADOR AT LUNCH THURSDAY, JANUARY 31.  
UNDER-SECRETARY GIANCARLO INNOCENZI AND MIN. GIANFRANCO  
GIORGIOLO, THE DIPLOMATIC ADVISOR, DCM POPE, AND ECMIN DEAN  
ALSO ATTENDED.

AFNS

3. (U) THE AMBASSADOR USED THE OPPORTUNITY TO RAISE THE  
NEED OF THE US AMERICAN FORCES NETWORK SOUTH (AFNS) TO  
PROVIDE RADIO AND TELEVISION COMMUNICATIONS ACCESS TO THE  
U.S. MILITARY COMMUNITY IN ITALY (AROUND 65,000 PEOPLE) AS  
NECESSARY FOR FORCE PROTECTION AND FOR MORALE. SINCE THE  
ITALIAN MINISTRY OF DEFENSE WILL NOT EXTEND LOANER  
FREQUENCIES BEYOND THE END OF 2002, DOD IS CONCERNED THAT WE  
MAY LOSE OUR ABILITY TO COMMUNICATE WITH OFF-DUTY MILITARY  
AND THEIR FAMILIES. THE MINISTER SAID THAT HE WOULD LOOK  
INTO IT.

4. (SBU) ON FRIDAY, FEB. 1, ING. GIGANTINO FROM THE MINISTRY  
OF COMMUNICATION AND THE INDIVIDUAL RESPONSIBLE FOR TRACKING  
THE AFNS ISSUE, CALLED US SENDING STATE OFFICE AND THE  
ECONOMIC MINISTER SEPARATELY TO SAY THAT THE MINISTRY WOULD  
HAVE NO PROBLEMS WITH THE MINISTRY OF DEFENSE AND ITALIAN  
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DEFENSE GENERAL STAFF (IDGS) EXTENDING THE LOAN OF THE  
FREQUENCIES BEYOND THE END OF THE YEAR AS LONG AS THE MOD AND  
IDGS AGREED. THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATION, HOWEVER, HAS NO  
CIVILIAN FREQUENCIES THAT THEY COULD LEND. THE MINISTRY  
WANTED TO KNOW WHAT THE U.S. PROPOSALS WERE FOR A SOLUTION  
WHEN THE LOAN PERIOD EXPIRES AT THE END OF THE YEAR.  
(COMMENT: DESPITE THE MINISTER'S OPTIMISTIC VIEW THAT HE  
COULD FIX THIS, THE FOLLOW-UP CALL INDICATES ESSENTIALLY NO  
PROGRESS.)

FAIR MARKET ACCESS FOR U.S. FIRMS

5. (U) THE AMBASSADOR ALSO EMPHASIZED THE NEED TO HAVE A  
LEVEL PLAYING FIELD IN THE BUSINESS WORLD. ITALY AND THE  
U.S. ARE IN AN INCREASINGLY GLOBAL MARKET PLACE AND THE RULES  
NEED TO BE TRANSPARENT AND FAIR. IF IT TAKES ONLY TWO DAYS  
FOR AN AMERICAN TO SWITCH TELEPHONE PROVIDERS, AND 12 DAYS IN  
EUROPE, IT IS HARD TO UNDERSTAND WHY IT SHOULD 28-35 DAYS IN  
ITALY. SUCH DELAYS LOOK LIKE A BARRIER TO THOSE COMPANIES  
WHO WISH TO PROVIDE COMMERCIAL ALTERNATIVES TO THE MONOPOLY  
PROVIDER.

6. (U) THE AMBASSADOR RAISED THE JOINT STRIKE FIGHTER AS AN  
EXAMPLE WHERE THE U.S. WAS LOOKING FOR TOP QUALITY PARTNERS,  
THOSE WHO PRODUCE TOP-NOTCH PRODUCTS. WE LOOK FORWARD TO  
ITALY'S BECOMING A PARTNER IN THE JSF. EVERYONE WOULD BE  
ABLE TO COMPETE FOR CONTRACTS, AND THIS IS WHAT WE WOULD LIKE  
TO SEE ON ITALY'S SIDE.

MOTOROLA

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7. (SBU) REINFORCING THE EMBASSY'S ADVOCACY WITH ITALY FOR  
MOTOROLA TO WIN AN ITALIAN INTERIOR MINISTRY TENDER FOR A  
NATIONAL PUBLIC SAFETY DIGITAL MOBILE COMMUNICATIONS SYSTEM,  
THE AMBASSADOR AGAIN EMPHASIZED THE NEED FOR 'BUYING THE  
BEST' AND 'MOTOROLA TECHNOLOGY IN THIS FIELD IS THE BEST'.  
THE MINISTER UNDERLINED THAT THIS IS NOT A MINISTRY OF

WIRELESS LOCAL LOOP  
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INFO	LOG-00	AGRE-00	AID-00	CEA-01	CIAE-00	CIP-00	COME-00
	CTME-00	DODE-00	ITCE-00	DOTE-00	SRPP-00	EB-00	EXME-00
	E-00	FAAE-00	UTED-00	FCC-01	VC-00	FRB-00	H-01
	TEDE-00	INR-00	ITC-01	LAB-01	L-00	VCE-00	AC-01
	NSAE-00	NSCE-00	OMB-01	OPIC-01	PM-00	ACE-00	SP-00
	SSO-00	SS-00	STR-00	TEST-00	TRSE-00	USIE-00	SNIS-00
	NISC-00	PMB-00	DRL-02	G-00	SAS-00	SWCI-00	/010W
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HE THOUGHT IT IS NECESSARY TO LIBERALIZE THE MARKET AND  
IMPROVE THE CHOICES AVAILABLE.

BIO

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19. MAURIZIO GASPARRI IS ONE OF THE CLOSEST ADVISERS OF THE NATIONAL ALLIANCE LEADER AND DEPUTY PM GIANFRANCO FINI. GASPARRI WAS BORN IN ROME ON JULY 18, 1957, GRADUATED FROM HIGH SCHOOL, AND WORKED AS A JOURNALIST UNTIL 1994. HE WAS ELECTED TO THE CHAMBER OF DEPUTIES IN 1992 WITH THE RIGHTIST ITALIAN SOCIAL MOVEMENT. IN THE CHAMBER HE HAS BEEN A MEMBER OF COMMITTEES FOR PRODUCTIVE ACTIVITIES, DEFENSE AND JUSTICE. HE WAS UNDER SECRETARY IN THE INTERIOR MINISTRY UNDER THE FIRST BERLUSCONI GOVERNMENT. HE IS MARRIED AND HAS ONE DAUGHTER. HE DOES NOT SPEAK MUCH ENGLISH, ALTHOUGH HE APPEARS TO UNDERSTAND SOME.  
SEMBLER

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